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heir. It is the ritual we are performing, they are signs of widowhood (*fya bufwele*), of lamentation (*kyo kesa*). The ashes are a sign of lamentation and the *ilingolongofwa* creeper is a sign of lamentation. Yes, all these things are part of the ritual, we cannot leave them out, it is taboo. (If we did) those below [i.e. the shades] would be angry and say: 'They have startled me and caused me pain in the heart; they have injured the ritual by foreshadowing evil.'

At the end the heir sleeps with the women in the house—before the beer. He performs the ritual with them, the officiants wait for them and ask them: 'How was it?' If he says 'No,' they say: 'Kyala does not stand in the house.' They go and divine at a doctor's who says:' So-and-so is angry.'

QUESTION: Kyala does not stand in the house (*Kyala akema nnyumba*)?

MWANDISI: It is the shades, they say Kyala does not give support. Then again he performs the ritual (*ikunyagula*, i.e. he attempts to have coitus) and they ask him: 'How was it?' They say: 'Yes, they (the shades) have stood with us, Kyala has stood with us.' [He gave both forms as alternatives: *batwemile* and *Kyala emile*.] Then they clap their hands and raise the shout of triumph (*akalulu*).

QUESTION: Is that the cry: 'Ours, ours!'?

MWANDISI: No, that's the cry of the hill people. With us it's taboo. Then in the morning someone shouts: 'War has come.' They come out immediately and run away to the pasture-lands.

QUESTION: Is this 'coming out' (*ukusoka*) the same as that in the coming out of chiefs (*ubusoka*) and in the twin ceremony?

MWANDISI: Yes, they run because their legs were heavy (*nsito*) in the house, now they have grown lighter and are strong; because in the twin ceremony the seclusion in the house lasts four months, at the coming out of chiefs two months, and that is hard, but at death it is only one, so it is light. But at death and the birth of twins it is the war (*ubwite*) of the mats. Is it not war with women? [*ubwite* is used here for sexual intercourse.] Then when they have come out they give one another beer to drink in the doorway. The heir takes beer in his mouth and spits it out and hands the vessel on to his wives and children. Each does the same. They do not swallow it. To do so causes diarrhœa. The man and his wives are burning. They have come from the bed. This giving one another to drink, when each spits and does not swallow, happens after the eating of sausages of porridge on the road.[1] It is the same in the twin ritual except that whereas it is only the principals who give one another to drink at the death ritual, in the twin ritual not only they, but all relatives, and even non-relatives do it as well!

QUESTION: How about the eating of millet porridge with powdered medicine on the road?

[1] No other informant mentioned this in the MuNgonde death ritual.

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her husband may give her *ikipiki* to rub on her hands and on a stick with which she touches each of the cattle. She gives them *ikipiki* that they may not be "empty". Then she can clean out the byre at any time.'

A third idea that recurs, again and again, is that of *ukukilanya*, overstepping, which is used in both a literal and a metaphorical sense. It is taboo for a woman to step over her husband in any way, hence there are explicit rules (taught during initiation) on posture in intercourse. It she should step over him it is said that 'his legs will swell' and he has grounds for divorcing her. It is taboo for an adult to step over a child and for a woman who is having intercourse to step over one who is not, though a child may step over an adult and a virgin or youth who is not having intercourse may step over a married person of the same sex who is not. In a society in which everyone sits on the ground, often with legs outstretched, observance of the taboo necessitates care.

In its metaphorical sense *ukukilyana* is used for a 'heavy' person coming into close contact with an 'empty' one, as, for example, a woman who is sleeping with her husband entering the hut of a woman with a new-born child, or the mother of a bride resuming intercourse before her daughter has had intercourse, or a bride who has not yet brought the *ilibalaga*, the symbol of her union with her husband, to her parents, drinking from her mother's calabash, or entering the inner part of her hut; or a wife who has committed adultery cooking for her husband. It is used, too, of a woman who continues to bear children after the marriage of her son for, it is said, if she does so the son's wife will never conceive at all, or will be long in conceiving, or her child will not walk, on account of a curse.

MWAIKAMBO: It is not customary for mother and son both to have infants. Women mostly begin to stop intercourse when their sons marry. They say it is not good that both mother and son should have small children, because the mother of the young man now thinks of helping her daughter-in-law in nourishing her children. If mother and son both have babies, people are much astonished and say it is not a good custom; they create a curse (*ikigune*) and the fertility of the son and his wife rots.

Mwaihojo's wife put it this way:

I leave off having children when my son is married for I should receive my grandchild in my arms, and care for my grandchildren, and be with them in the house.

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195 *Ukukinda* means to pass, to surpass, and *ukukilanya* (overstepping), in its metaphorical use, implies that 'one has power and the other is weak, so the powerful one does some injury to the weak one'.

834 842 753 Fourthly, as was made apparent in the puberty ritual, it is held to be dangerous to 'mix bloods'. Adultery is not only an infringement of the exclusive rights of a husband, but it may injure him directly, causing him to have diarrhœa, which is a 'getting rid of the filth' due to contact with a strange 'blood'. It was implied that intercourse with a menstruating woman was in some sense 'mixing bloods' also, and the danger to parents of contact with a newly-married daughter before a precautionary ritual has been performed, stems from the same thing; the parents, through their daughter, are brought into contact with the blood of another lineage, that of the new son-in-law.

843 Besides being 'heavy' and therefore liable to 'overstep' others, a pregnant woman is thought to reduce the quantity of any grain she approaches, for the foetus within her is voracious and snatches it. Therefore neither she nor her husband (who participates in her condition) may approach other people's millet[1] or beans or oil-seeds spread out to dry, or speak to those who are reaping or grinding or stamping or brewing, without making a gesture of good-will by spitting on a pebble or knotting a leaf, and throwing it into the heap of grain. The sanction is fear of a miscarriage, for the owners of the food may have used medicines 'so that the food may be much and people be astonished'. Her own crops a pregnant woman may handle freely, and a chief's wife does not observe the taboo in her own village.

Two or three quotations will make these conceptions clearer:

ANGOMBWIKE: When my wife has conceived they say we are both 'heavy', both my wife and I. Then, if oil-seeds or millet are out drying in the sun, they tell us not to speak. 'You are heavy ones,' they say. So we are silent. They say that if there is talking we will catch hold of the oil-seeds or millet, and it will diminish. Yes, I must avoid the grain even though I am alone, because I am heavy.

KASITILE: Maize does not vanish but millet and beans. The child which is being made bewitches them; they disappear. . . . The child has opened its mouth wide, its jaws gape.[2] It is that child which is being

184 [1] Some held that millet was the only grain affected; others maintained that maize was also.

[2] *Umwana apambuile akapumbo akamwa. Ukapumbo* is used of the gaping jaws of a crocodile.

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Burier of men!—Great Father! Great Father!—O Mpeta![1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kiposa[1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Kyabala![1]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Striker and Stabber! —Great Father! Great Father!—O Mwesende![2]—Great Father! Great Father!—O Mpolombasambo![2]—Great Father! Great Father! —Dweller in the hot sun!—Great Father! Great Father!—O Fish-eater! O Banana-eater!—Great Father! Great Father!'" The general form of this praise-song was identical with that of the prayers in the sacred groves and so it is literally true to say that the nobles of Ngonde worshipped the living Kyungus.

But the majority of their subjects only worshipped from afar in fear and trembling. At Mbande no ordinary commoner was ever conducted into the sacred enclosure but only the territorial nobles and the elder chiefs, and they only occasionally; while when the Kyungu travelled through his country all men save the very oldest fled from his approach: "In former times we commoners never looked on the face of the Kyungu, we feared him far too much. When he journeyed through Ngonde we all used to flee from him, men, women and children; only the very oldest stayed to watch him as he came; and they would fall down and clap their hands in grateful worship."

Even in speech fearful circumlocutions were used to refer to his journeying—"The country is on the move"—"The great hill is moving"—"The mystery is coming." While it was taboo both for the old men who then stayed to see him and for those who entered the sacred enclosure, ever to greet him in the usual way. Falling down and clapping the hands was the only greeting for the Kyungu, never the ordinary "how-do-you-do?" From the nobles and great chiefs men did not flee; but the great chiefs, at least, were greeted by falling down and handclapping, not in the ordinary way.

From the wives of the Kyungu also men fled in terror, fearing lest they be compromised and thrown over the cliff, and this both added to the atmosphere of terror which surrounded him and was an expression of it.

On the other hand the various gifts of the Kyungu to his subjects were, in their ceremonial aspect, an expression of personal relationship to them, of paternal interest in them; and so also the tribute which they brought to him was, in its ceremonial aspect, an expression of filial respect. As in all primitive groups personal rather than impersonal relationships were dominant in the old Ngonde. The Kyungu was

[1] Names of early Kyungus.
[2] Archaic words which I do not understand.